

would become law. But even if the General Assembly should sustain my veto, it is probable that other efforts would be made by the General Assembly to secure a court test of the provisions of Senate Bill 8.

I am convinced that the best and most expeditious way to settle the reapportionment problem is to follow the procedure that will bring about a prompt court determination of the constitutionality of Senate Bill 8. The only way this can be accomplished is for me to sign Senate Bill 8 since I am advised that an unsigned bill has no standing in the eyes of the court.

For the above stated reasons, I am signing both Senate Bills 5 and 8. I do so, confident that Senate Bill 5 will be the basis for an effective reapportionment of the General Assembly of Maryland.

STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR J. MILLARD TAWES
FOR RELEASE FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1966

Today, I take great pleasure in signing into law two companion measures. The first is House Bill 44 which calls for a special election to be held at the same time as the next primary election on September 13, 1966, to take "the sense of the people" on whether a Constitutional Convention should be called between September 1, 1967, and September 1, 1968. The second is Senate Bill 594 which designates September 12, 1967, as the date for the convening of such a Convention if a majority of the people voting at the special election next September vote in favor of a Constitutional Convention. This bill also establishes the composition of such a Convention at 142 delegates.

The present Constitution of Maryland, adopted in 1867, has been amended more than one hundred times, and many lawyers, judges, legislators and students of political science have expressed to me the opinion that it is too lengthy and too detailed to serve satisfactorily as the basic law of our State.

Accordingly, on June 16, 1965, I appointed a Constitutional Convention Commission and, among other things, "instructed it to conduct an inquiry into the necessity for . . . a revision of the Constitution of Maryland, with particular respect to whether a Constitutional Convention should be held." This Commission very promptly reported to me and to the citizens of Maryland that a complete revision of the Constitution of Maryland was urgently needed and that a complete revision could best be accomplished by means of a Constitutional Convention.